

New Jersey Board of Nursing

consumer**brief**

The New Jersey Board of Nursing was established in 1912 to protect the health, safety and welfare of New Jersey's residents by ensuring that those who practice nursing are qualified and competent to do so.

The Board of Nursing consists of thirteen (13) members appointed by the Governor. Seven (7) are registered professional nurses (one of whom must be an advanced practice nurse), two (2) are licensed practical nurses, three (3) are public members and one (1) is a State government representative.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BOARD IS TO:

- regulate the practice of nursing;
- approve nursing education programs and certified homemaker-home health aide certification programs;
- license nurses;
- certify homemaker-home health aides;
- regulate the duties of certified homemaker-home health aides; and
- ensure that nurses and certified homemaker-home health aides perform their duties in compliance with state law.

HOW DOES THE BOARD PROTECT THE PUBLIC?

The board protects the public by:

- ensuring that nurses and certified homemaker-home health aides meet the requisite educational requirements for licensure and certification;
- investigating and prosecuting nurses and certified homemaker-home health aides who do not perform their duties in compliance with state laws; and

- adopting rules, regulations and policies governing the practice of nursing and certified homemaker-home health aides.

What are my rights as a consumer if I have a complaint against a nurse or certified homemaker-home health aide?

Every consumer has the right to file a written complaint against a nurse or a certified homemaker-home health aide. Complaints should be filed, in writing, with the New Jersey Board of Nursing, P.O. Box 45010, Newark, NJ 07101.



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HOW ARE COMPLAINTS RESOLVED?

If the complaint is within the board's jurisdiction:

- the complaint may be referred to an investigator who may contact you for additional information;
- the nurse or certified homemaker-home health aide will be asked to respond to your allegations;
- the board will evaluate the complaint and the response of the nurse or certified homemaker-home health aide and determine if the complaint involves a violation of law.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If a violation did occur, the board may punish the licensee through fines, penalties or other disciplinary procedures including a reprimand or revocation or suspension of the license or certificate to practice.

During disciplinary proceedings, licensees may be represented by an attorney and are given the right to demonstrate their compliance with the law. Once the board has taken action against the licensee, he or she has the right to appeal the action.

You will be notified, in writing, when the complaint is resolved.

DETERMINE WHAT SERVICES YOU NEED

Health care services are provided by Registered Professional Nurses (RNs), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and other health care providers - such as occupational therapists, physical therapists, respiratory therapists, dieticians and social workers.

Personal or assistant services are provided by certified homemaker-home health aides (CHHHAs). A New Jersey Registered Professional Nurse must supervise the CHHHA and your program of care. The CHHHAs assist the nurse by providing personal care services such as bathing, dressing, meal preparation and feeding.

Generally, housekeeping services such as shopping, cooking and laundering for the family are provided by a housekeeper, companion or a domestic service rather than a CHHHA.

Before purchasing services, talk with your nurse, doctor or hospital discharge planner to be sure you understand exactly what type of services you require.

For a free copy of our "Consumer's Guide to Certified Homemaker-Home Health Aides," you may contact 800-242-5846.

BE INFORMED

Being informed about services before a health care crisis arises will save you time and money, reduce stress, and allow for a better quality of decision-making and care.

USING AN AGENCY

If you select an agency for home care, which is licensed by the State, there are laws to protect you.

Accredited agencies are professional groups that establish and monitor voluntary, industry-wide standards to ensure that patients receive quality home health care services. They are listed in the Consumer's Guide to CHHHAs.

Be sure to ask if the certified home health-care agency protects its workers and patients with written policies, as well as insurance coverage. Be sure you understand the specifics of your insurance policy and the certified home health-care agency's insurance coverage.

INSIST ON SAFE, COMPETENT CARE

If you have a problem with a licensed nurse or CHHHA, complain to the agency you are using so that any problems can be resolved. If the agency cannot resolve your complaint to your satisfaction, contact the Board of Nursing at 973-424-8146.

CHECK LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION

Contact the Board of Nursing to make sure the nurse or certified homemaker-home health aide with whom you are dealing is licensed or certified and in good standing. Call the License Verification Section at 973-273-8090.

Check references if you are hiring a nurse or certified homemaker-home health aide from a private professional care service.

If you have any questions, you may contact the New Jersey Board of Nursing at 973-504-6430 or 800-242-5846, via e-mail at AskConsumerAffairs@lps.state.nj.us.

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